

Iowa Teacher Quality Program and the School Nurse

Evaluation and Professional Development

The Iowa Teacher Quality Program (TQP), Iowa Code 284, enhances the learning, achievement, and performance of all students through promotion of quality education. The program contains strategies including evaluation and professional development to increase student achievement. The definition of teacher includes an individual holding a statement of professional recognition (SPR) under 282 Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) 14.140(11) b. and employed in a nonadministrative position by a school district or area education agency under Iowa Code 279.13. A school nurse who holds a SPR from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners including a license to practice as a registered nurse (RN) from the Iowa Board of Nursing, and a baccalaureate degree meets the definition and of “teacher” for the purpose of the Teacher Quality legislation and is eligible for certain aspects of the TQP. These aspects include teacher quality compensation, evaluation, and professional development.

The Comprehensive School Improvement Plan is the foundation of the evaluation and professional development. At a minimum, evaluation and professional development, for the eligible nurse, align with the employing agency plans. The plans must align with the Iowa teaching standards, the student achievement goals of the attendance center and the employing agency, and the nurse’s needs.

The eligible school nurse uses the 8 Iowa Teacher Standards and 42 Criteria (281 IAC 83) to develop their evaluation and personal professional development plans. The school nurse may address, in the supporting evidence, their professional nursing standards from the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) and American Nurses Association (ANA) *School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice*. The *School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* align and reinforce the Iowa teacher standards and criteria.

Comprehensive evaluation plan. The eligible nurse follows the agency developed evaluation process that meets the Iowa Code to improve student achievement. The evaluation determines if the nurse’s practice meets the agency expectations. The plan:

- Uses the Iowa teaching standards and criteria;
- Is reviewed once every three years by the licensed evaluator conducting the evaluation process;
- Includes, at a minimum: observation; review of progress on the Iowa teaching standards; additional standards and criteria if established; review of the individual professional development plan implementation; and supporting documentation from other evaluators, teachers, nurses, parents, and students;
- Provides for the individual professional development plans and;
- Includes provisions for an assistance program.

(281 IAC 83.5(3))

The eligible school nurse accomplishes this through continuous skill improvement, documenting or

gathering evidence related to the Iowa standards, agency plans, and identifying areas of needed improvement.

Individual professional development plan. The purpose of the individual professional development plan is to increase student achievement through individual and group professional development. The plan:

- Aligns to the fullest extent possible with the district professional development plan;
- Bases the goals on the relevant Iowa teaching standards that support the student achievement goals of the attendance center and agency, as appropriate, as outlined in the comprehensive school improvement plan and the needs of the individual, at a minimum;
- Goes beyond the goals required under the attendance center professional development plan;
- Meets the learning opportunity goals of the individual plan and includes individual study and collaborative study of agency–determined content, to the extent possible;
- Is developed by the individual in collaboration with the evaluator and;
- Is reviewed and refined in an annual meeting between the evaluator and the individual.

(281 IAC 83.6(1))

Nurses may consider professional development that relates to the health and well-being of students and what school nurses need to know and be able to do to contribute to student learning. Learning opportunities for nurses are research-based individual and collaborative study.

The TQP does not require continuing education credits. If the nurse participates in professional nursing continuing education that offers continuing education credits, the content must align with the goals set in their Individual Professional Development Plan to consider it professional growth for the purposes of complying with the TQP.

References

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Iowa Department of Education. (July 23, 2008). *Memo to Iowa Administrators: Guidance on House File 2679. I. "Clarification the Iowa Teaching Standards and Alternative Criteria*. The alternative criteria are not to be used in the evaluation process for district staff who meet the criteria of teacher. Nurses, guidance counselors, and other non-classroom teachers must be evaluated using the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria adopted in 2002. This corrects earlier guidance by the Department." Kevin Fangman, Administrator, Division of PK-12 Education. <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/1531/1693>